

**DIALECTISMS IN THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE: FEATURES, CLASSIFICATION,
AND ROLE IN CULTURE.**

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Abstract: This article examines dialectisms in the Russian language, their features, classification, and role in culture. The main dialects of the Russian language—Northern, Southern, and Central Russian dialects—are examined, along with their phonetic, grammatical, and lexical differences. The article describes the types of dialectisms: lexical, phonetic, grammatical, word-formation, and semantic, with examples of their use. Particular attention is paid to the role of dialectisms in literature and folklore, where they create local flavor and emphasize authenticity.

Introduction Dialectisms are words, expressions, or grammatical constructions characteristic of regional dialects and vernaculars that do not conform to the norms of the literary language. They reflect the regional characteristics of the Russian language, shaped by historical, geographic, and social factors. In Russian, dialectisms play an important role in preserving cultural diversity and are also used in literature to create local flavor and authenticity. By definition, dialectisms are dialectal inclusions in the literary language that help convey the specific speech characteristics of speakers from specific regions.

The Russian language, as one of the most widely spoken Slavic languages, has a rich dialect system. Dialects have developed over centuries, beginning in the Old Russian period, and continue to evolve under the influence of urbanization and globalization. In this article, we will examine the classification of Russian dialects, types of dialectisms, examples of their use, and their significance in literature and modern society.

Classification of Russian Dialects

Russian dialects are traditionally divided into two main dialects: northern and southern, with an intermediate zone of Central Russian dialects. This division is based on phonetic, grammatical, and lexical features.

Northern Dialect: Common in areas north of the Central Russian dialects, including the Arkhangelsk, Vologda, and Kostroma regions and parts of Siberia. It is characterized by "okanye"—a clear distinction between vowels in unstressed syllables (for example, the word "milk" is pronounced with a clear "o" in each syllable). Other features include the explosive pronunciation of "g" (as in English "go"), tsokanye (a mixture of "ts" and "ch"), and specific

grammatical constructions, such as "poit v lesu" (to go in the forest) instead of the literary "poit v les" (to go to the forest).

Southern Dialect: Covers the southern regions, including the Kursk, Oryol, and Voronezh Oblasts and parts of Ukraine. Here, "akanye" (the indistinction between "a" and "o" in unstressed syllables) predominates (for example, "milk" sounds like "malako"). Other features include the fricative "g" (like the "kh" in Ukrainian), yakanye (replacing "e" with "ya" in some positions), and constructions such as "shody do rechki" (to go to the river) instead of "shody k reke" (to go to the river).

Central Russian Dialects: This is a transitional zone, including the Moscow, Vladimir, and Nizhny Novgorod Oblasts. They combine features of the northern and southern dialects and form the basis of the modern literary Russian language. For example, moderate akanye (pronunciation) and mixed grammatical forms can be observed here. The formation of these dialects is linked to historical processes: the settlement of territories in the 12th and 13th centuries, interdialectal contacts, and the influence of neighboring languages (Finno-Ugric in the north, Turkic in the south). By the 15th century, dialects had already formed, while in later regions (the Volga region, the Urals, Siberia), dialects are a mixture due to migrations.

Types of Dialectisms

Dialectisms are classified by linguistic levels: lexical, phonetic, grammatical, word-formation, and semantic.

Lexical Dialectisms: Words denoting objects or phenomena absent from the literary language or having synonyms. Examples: "kuren" (house in southern Russia), "laika" (dog in northern dialects), "porebrik" (curb in the St. Petersburg dialect). They often reflect local life: "izba" (hut) instead of "dom" (house) in the northern regions. **Phonetic dialectisms:** These differ in pronunciation. For example, in southern dialects, "khata" is used instead of "khata" (with the fricative "g"), or "tsokanye" is used in northern dialects: "tsai" is used instead of "chai."

Grammatical dialectisms: Changes in morphology and syntax. Examples: "to mow the grass" (nominative case instead of accusative), "on Maslenitsa we baked pancakes" (the preposition "o" denotes time).

Word-formation dialectisms: These differ in affixes. For example, "mushroom season hasn't yet passed" (with a suffix different from the literary one).

Semantic dialectisms: Words with a different meaning than in the literary language. For example, "smak" is like "vkus" in some dialects, or "govet" is like "to fast."

These types often overlap, creating unique regional characteristics.

Examples of dialectisms in use

Dialectisms are actively used in the speech of native speakers and in fiction, emphasizing regional flavor. In northern dialects, the word baskoy means "beautiful," for example: "Your

baskoy house is by the river." In the south, instead of the word onion, they might say tsibuli: "Add tsibuli to your soup." In Central Russian dialects, especially the St. Petersburg dialect, a curb is called porebrik: "Don't step on the curb!" Grammatical dialectisms are found in constructions such as the northern "poshili v lesu zamrubi" (meaning "went mushrooms in the forest") instead of the literary "v lesu" (meaning "to the forest") or the southern "khodi do rechki" (meaning "go to the river") instead of the literary "k rechki" (meaning "to the river").

In literature, dialectisms help create a vibrant character. For example, in Mikhail Sholokhov's novel "Tikhiy Don" (And Quiet Flows the Don), the Cossack characters use southern dialectisms such as "kuren" (house) and "stanitsa" (village). Vasily Belov's works about northern villages feature words like "izba" (hut) and constructions with "okanye" (meaning "okanye"), emphasizing the local flavor.

The Role of Dialectisms in Literature and Culture

Dialectisms are used in fiction to stylize speech, create atmosphere, and characterize characters. Classic writers like Nikolai Leskov ("Levsha") and modern authors like Viktor Astafyev incorporate dialectisms for authenticity. In folklore (proverbs, fairy tales), they preserve the cultural heritage: "Don't go into the water without asking where the ford is" with dialectal variations.

In culture, dialectisms influence music and art. The group "Ivan-Kupala" uses folklore elements with dialectisms. However, in the 20th and 21st centuries, dialects have been declining due to education, media, and migration. Speakers remain predominantly elderly rural residents.

Current Status and Prospects

Today, dialectisms are permeating colloquial speech and internet culture, but traditional dialects are fading. Research (dialectology) records them in atlases and dictionaries. In education, dialectisms are studied to understand linguistic diversity. Despite unification, they remain a source of inspiration for linguists and writers.

Conclusion. Dialectisms are living evidence of the evolution of the Russian language, reflecting its diversity. They not only preserve historical memory but also enrich modern speech. The study of dialectisms helps us understand the cultural roots of a people and contributes to the preservation of linguistic heritage in the era of globalization. For a more in-depth understanding, we recommend consulting dictionaries of Russian dialects or the works of regional authors.

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